

Open Research Online

The Open University's repository of research publications and other research outputs

Creating a Virtual Research Environment to build a research Community

Conference or Workshop Item

How to cite:

Bruce, James; Faulkner, Dorothy and O'Dell, Lindsay (2014). Creating a Virtual Research Environment to build a research Community. In: UKCGE International Annual Conference, 2014, Dublin.

For guidance on citations see [FAQs](#).

© [not recorded]



<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

Version: Version of Record

Link(s) to article on publisher's website:

<http://www.ukcge.ac.uk/events/international-annual-conference-2014—doctoral-training-structures—form-and-functionality-44.a>

Copyright and Moral Rights for the articles on this site are retained by the individual authors and/or other copyright owners. For more information on Open Research Online's data [policy](#) on reuse of materials please consult the policies page.

oro.open.ac.uk

Doctoral Training at The Open University

Creating a Virtual Research Environment to
build a research community



Our research community



- 1200 PGRs (global)
- Diverse
- Wide range of subjects



Why build a VRE?



- We aim to provide parity of experience for all PGRs
- Support both on campus and at a distance
- Online services customised for graduate need
- Integrated research community students, supervisors, partner institutions administrators



OU model delivers access at scale to global users

20,000
research publications
freely available

6000
people in 15 countries
participated in an
OU-led citizen
science project

18 million
visits to OpenLearn.
The OU's free
learning website

800
videos. The UK's
largest university
channel

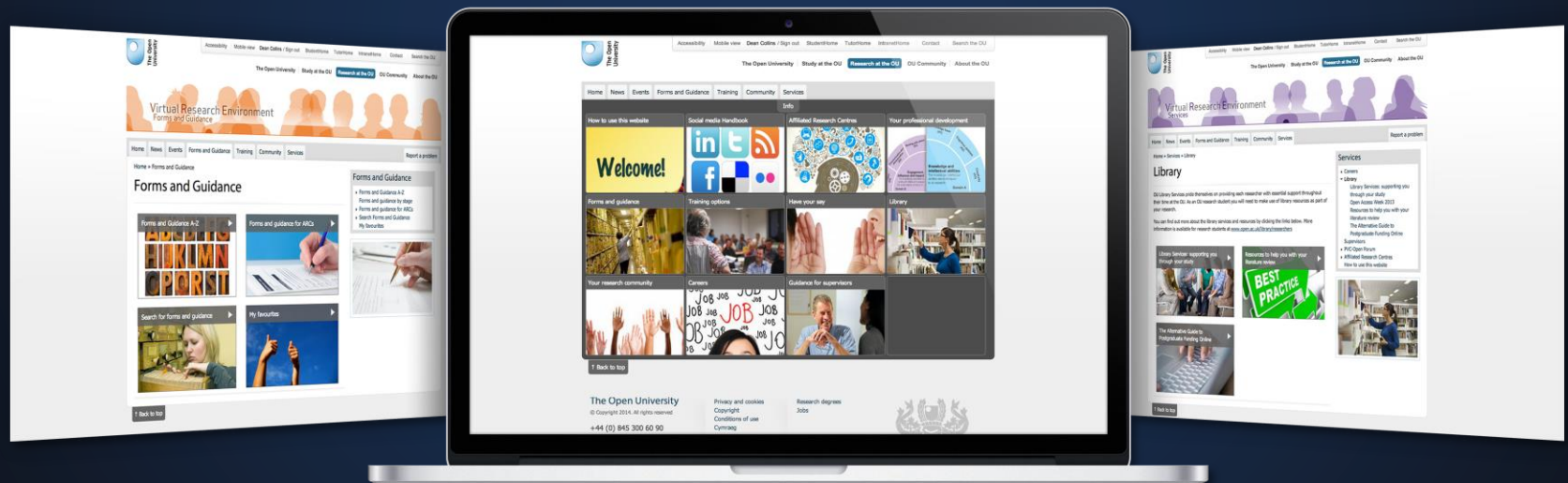
60,000
unique users
per day on the
VLE

40 million
downloads
on iTunes



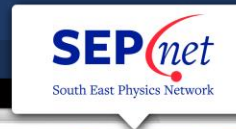


The VRE is an online portal to resources and tools





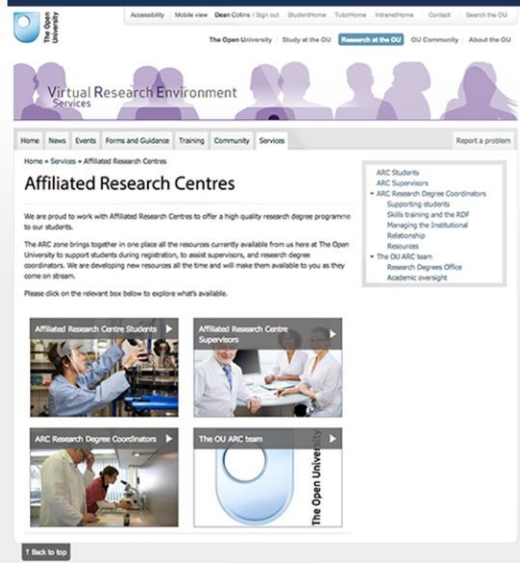
SEPnet – A research community within the VRE





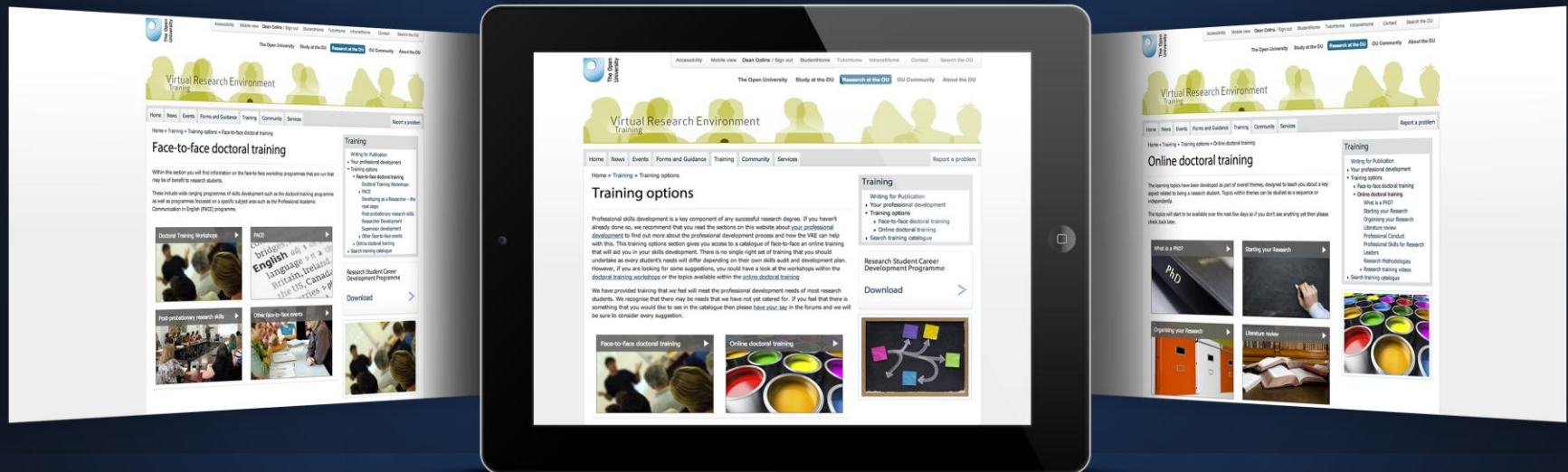
DTP communities on the VRE







Training within the VRE





Asynchronously, synchronously or “flipped” in face to face sessions

The image displays three overlapping screenshots of The Open University website, illustrating different learning models:

- Left Screenshot (Asynchronous):** Shows a page titled "Gas cylinders" under the "Personal Protection systems" section. It includes a list of contents (Introduction, Personal protective equipment, Eye protection, Hand protection, Respiratory system protection, Control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH) regulations, Biological agents, Chemical information sources, COSHH risk assessment, Waste disposal, Types of waste, Waste segregation, Biological waste, Chemical waste, Radioactive material, Sharps, General laboratory waste, Waste storage, Radiation, Types of radiation, Pressure systems, Gas cylinders, Electricity at work, Fire safety, Conclusion, References, Other resources) and a detailed text block about gas cylinder safety. It also features a small image of a person in a lab coat handling a gas cylinder.
- Middle Screenshot (Synchronous):** Shows the "Virtual Research Environment Training" page. It includes a navigation bar with links like Home, News, Events, Forms and Guidance, Training, Community, and Services. The main content area is titled "Online doctoral training" and lists various training options: Writing for Publication, Your professional development, Training options, Face-to-face doctoral training, and Online doctoral training. It also features a "What is a PhD?" section and a "Starting your Research" section.
- Right Screenshot (Flipped):** Shows the "Professional Conduct" page. It includes a navigation bar with links like Home, News, Events, Forms and Guidance, Training, Community, and Services. The main content area is titled "Professional Conduct" and lists various training options: Writing for Publication, Your professional development, Training options, Face-to-face doctoral training, and Online doctoral training. It also features a "What is a PhD?" section and a "Starting your Research" section.

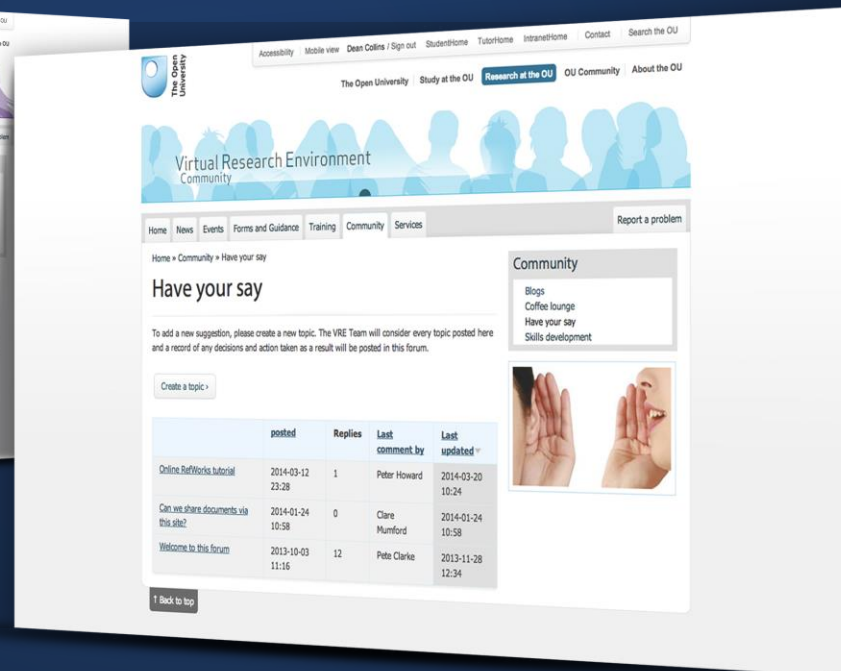
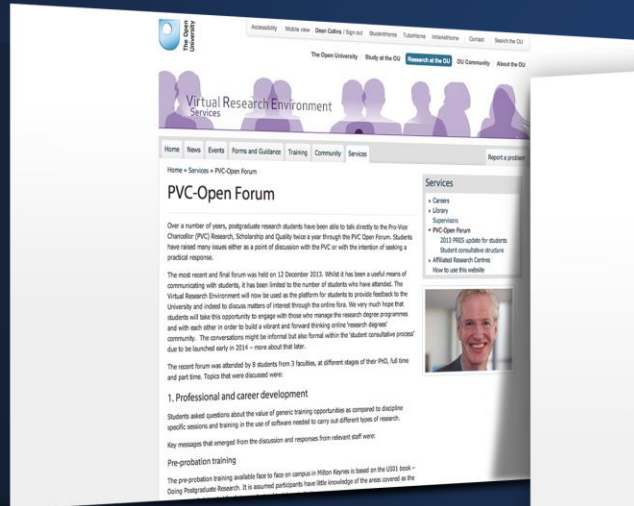


Community tools





The VRE listens to the community





Social Media and other community tools

The collage features several screenshots of The Open University's digital resources:

- OU-LIVE / Science trial:** A page with a navigation menu on the left (Help with this page, Navigation, OU-LIVE, Resources & forums, Trial access, Arts trial, FBI trial, FELS trial, HSC trial, IET trial, IT trial, KM trial, Library trial, MCT trial, OUSA trial, Social Sciences trial, Student Services trial, Champions area) and a central section for an "Activity Name: Science trial". It includes details like "Room Name: Science trial", "Description: Direct participant access", and session dates/times. A "Join Session" button is visible.
- Virtual Research Environment Training:** A page titled "Handbook of social media for researchers and supervisors" under the "Training" section. It includes a "Handbook of social media for researchers and supervisors" link and a "Research Development Framework" link.
- OU-LIVE / Study planner:** A page titled "OU Live preparation & piloting" with a "Study planner" section. It contains text about resources, links to sessions, and guidance material being assembled to aid in transition from Examine to OU Live.
- OU-LIVE / News:** A page titled "OU Live availability on VLE servers" with a "News" section. It includes a "23 Aug 2013 OU Live availability on VLE servers" update and a "25 Jul 2013 Updated briefing on OU Live" update.
- Smartphone:** A black smartphone in the foreground displays a Twitter feed with tweets from @ResearchPublicHealth, @ANU, and @TuesenKlein.



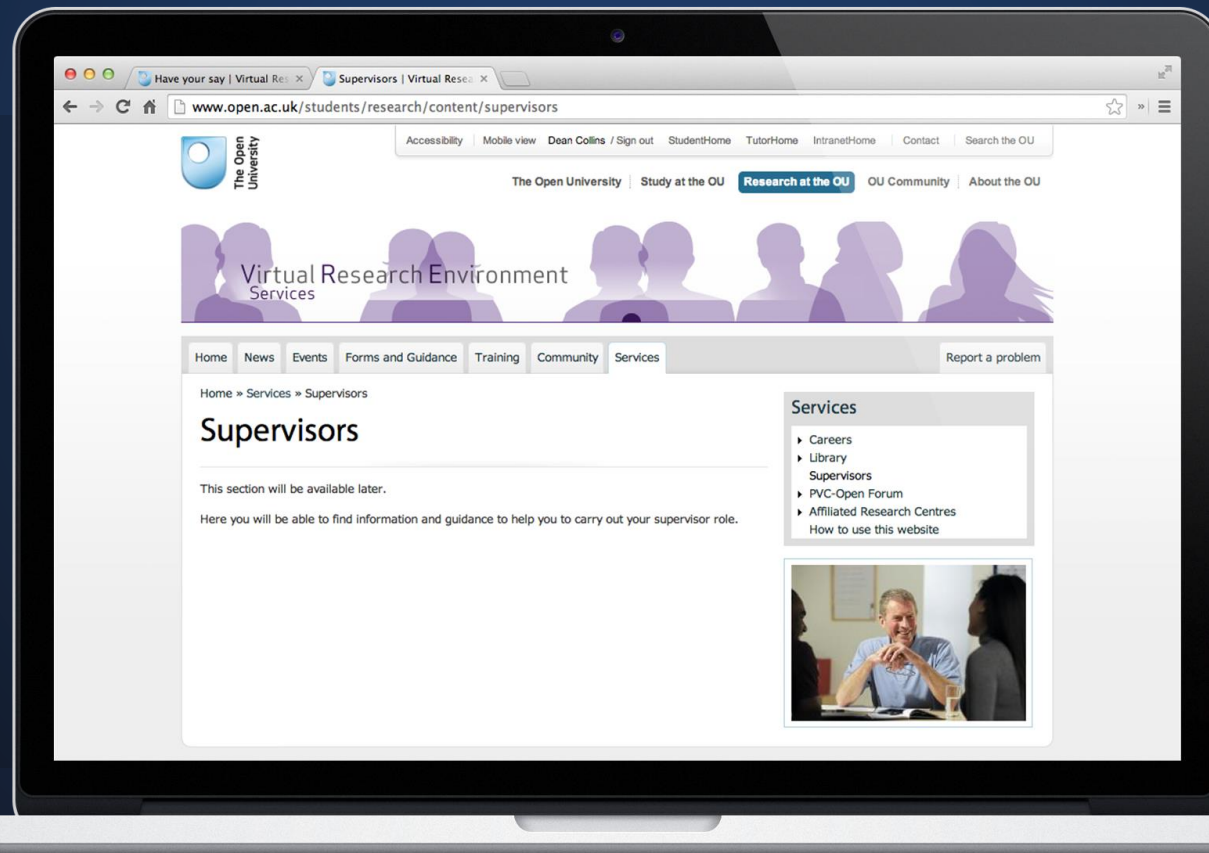
The VRE organises existing resources for the PGR student

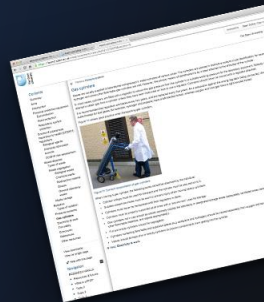
Careers





The VRE is designed to continually evolve and adapt to the community needs





Acknowledgments

Lindsay Odell

Dorothy Faulkner

Vivien Bacigalupo

Peter Howard

Sara Haslam

Paul Mulholland

Shonil Bhagwat

Tim Lewis

Rose Barbour

Chris High

Sue Oreszczyn

Regine Hempel

Fiona Ellis-Chadwick